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RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 002738

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [KTIA](#) [MARR](#) [MASS](#) [PTER](#) [KE](#) [SO](#)
SUBJECT: EMBASSY CONCURRENCE FOR FY09 HORN OF AFRICA
COUNTERINSURGENCY ENGAGEMENT 1206 PROPOSAL

REF: STATE 118337

Classified By: Ambassador Michael E. Ranneberger, reasons 1.4 (b,d).

¶1. (U) Embassy Nairobi has reviewed and supports S/CT's proposal to provide training in Best Practices and Lessons Learned in Counterinsurgency Operations to Kenya to help this nation build its capacity to perform these operations in an effective manner that respects human rights.

¶2. (C) The threat of terrorism is on the rise throughout the Horn of Africa, with Somalia serving as its epicenter. Al-Shabaab, a U.S.-designated foreign terrorist organization, now exercises control over large segments of Southern Somalia, and has sheltered and worked alongside al-Qaida operatives in East Africa. Kenya is a frontline state with a long and poorly controlled border with Somalia. Ineffective host nation counterinsurgency capabilities are a major impediment to effective counterterrorism capabilities, and in some cases, pose a threat to a continued security relationship with the United States. Kenya has waged domestic security and counterinsurgency campaigns and border control operations that have generated allegations of human rights abuses. Continued security assistance is likely to face serious questioning in the face of such allegations. Moreover, harsh tactics are counterproductive and increase the population's distrust of the government, dragging out the conflict.

¶3. (C) Kenya's military needs to develop counterinsurgency (COIN) doctrine, strategy, and tactics that are designed to win over) not alienate) public support, and target insurgents while minimizing abuses. U.S. counterinsurgency trainers and experts can share hard-learned lessons from Iraq and Afghanistan on building relationships with local populations, extracting information from suspects and informants without torture, and avoiding excessive collateral damage in military operations. In addition, training equipment may be provided.

¶4. (C) An improvement in COIN capabilities (and a commensurate improvement in COIN ops) would endow Kenya with the capability to expedite an end to local conflicts extremists can exploit and radicalize. More humane, balanced COIN ops would also facilitate a wider U.S. security relationship with Kenya at a time when AQ East Africa and al-Shabaab capabilities are on the rise. Enhanced COIN capabilities would help to contain the growth of a terrorist safehaven in Somalia and foster conditions whereby further strengthening of the East African security sector by the U.S. is feasible.
RANNEBERGER